

The Random Jottings of Donald Jay from Nelson in Pendle.

White Bear Inn Barrowford. And The Hobbits or Hobgoblins in 1667

In the quaint village of Barrowford, nestled within the rolling hills and verdant valleys, stood the historic White Bear Inn. It was a structure that seemed to have been plucked straight from the pages of history, with its stone walls weathered by time and its architecture telling tales of centuries gone by. This inn, once known as Hargreaves Great House, held within its timeworn walls a secret that was whispered through the generations.

The year was 1667, a time when the world was a vastly different place. Barrowford was a close-knit community where everyone knew everyone else, and the village folk were as hardy as the land they tilled. The White Bear Inn served as a hub of activity, its doors swinging open to welcome weary travelers, boisterous locals, and curious wanderers. The inn's reputation for hearty meals and the finest ale in the land drew patrons from far and wide.

Yet, it was not just the hospitality and camaraderie that made the White Bear Inn remarkable. Legends spoke of hobbits, or perhaps hobgoblins, who were said to have once resided in the village during those distant days. Whispers of their existence were passed down like heirlooms, stories shared around roaring fires and over foaming tankards. These creatures, so the tales went, were mischievous but benevolent beings, skilled in the arts of magic and renowned for their craftsmanship.

It was said that the very inn itself bore witness to their presence. The architectural details told a story of their influence, with the curious mullion windows that adorned the front facade, their intricate designs hinting at a touch of otherworldly craftsmanship. The locals would often point to the charming, circular single-storey portion of the inn, murmuring that it was surely a creation of the hobbits, a testament to their unique skills.

Among the villagers, there was a sense of pride in their connection to these mythical beings. Some claimed to possess heirlooms crafted by the hobbits, passed down through the generations, treasured not just for their beauty but for the enchantment they seemed to radiate. Others swore they had glimpsed the hobbits themselves, fleeting shadows in the moonlight or twinkling lights deep within the forest.

The heart of the inn, of course, was the bar itself. A massive inglenook fireplace stood as a centerpiece, where patrons would gather to share stories, sing songs, and raise their tankards in merriment. On cold winter nights, the flames would dance and flicker, casting shadows that seemed to evoke the presence of the hobbits themselves.

As time marched forward, the tales of the hobbits began to fade into the background, becoming woven into the fabric of the village's rich history. The White Bear Inn continued to stand, a stalwart sentinel of days gone by, its walls echoing with the laughter and camaraderie of countless generations.

And so, the story of the White Bear Inn in Barrowford lived on, a charming blend of reality and folklore, a place where the lines between the ordinary and the magical became beautifully blurred. The tales of hobbits and hobgoblins, of stone mullion windows and inglenook fireplaces, became an enduring part of the village's legacy, a reminder of the enchanting past that shaped its present.

By Donald Jay.